



Enforcing Emory

Mickie B. Ashling

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Olympic figure skater Emory Lowe falls in lust the moment he lays eyes on his new neighbor, hockey player Nikolai Vetrov. On the surface, Nik is a typical badass enforcer, intimidating and dangerous, on and off the ice. The only son of Ukrainian immigrants, Nik has been groomed from childhood to fulfill his father's dreams of seeing him in the Hockey Hall of Fame. Igor guides his son toward that goal with a controlling—and abusive—hand, steering him clear of anyone who might ruin his chances.

Although Emory is the US National Figure Skating champion, he's in-your-face gay, and his audacious persona rubs Nik and his family the wrong way. Raised by supportive and loving parents, Emory is Nik's polar opposite in every way but one—his desire to succeed. Underneath the fluff and glitter beats the heart of a fierce competitor, and this side of Emory's personality begins to close the distance between the two athletes.

While the attraction is one-sided in the beginning, Nik finds himself responding to Emory's flirting. But before the incongruous pair have a chance at any sort of relationship, they must survive the pressures of career, separation, and most importantly, Igor's ruthless homophobia.

Enforcing Emory Details

Date : Published May 27th 2015 by Dreamspinner Press LLC

ISBN : 9781634760843

Author : Mickie B. Ashling

Format : ebook 226 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Sports and Games, Sports, Contemporary, Lgbt, Sociology, Abuse

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From Reader Review Enforcing Emory for online ebook

Ele says

I'm not going to rate this, I think it would be unfair since after 40% of the book I kept skimming and skimming. And skimming.

I had many issues with this story. Now that I think about it everything in it was an issue.

-Homophobia is number one excuse for angst in MM, I agree. But man...it was just too much. Nik's family, gay rights and homophobia in Russia, gay bashing, unfair figure-skating judging ...And on top of all this, there is racism of all kinds.

"If ya gotta be gay, pick some white boy to do the nasty with."

"He's white."

"I meant American!"

Say what?

- The fathers.

Emory's dad, the "gay- friendly bigot" as Emory calls him. I'm sure he is supposed to be the nice guy here, protective of Emory and in the end supportive of Nik. I still didn't like him.

As for Nik's dad, I can't decide if he's just an abusive, bigoted asshole or a psychopath. I'm leaning towards the second. So yeah, the dads pissed me off. **And I certainly didn't need their POV!**

-I could maybe overlook all the above if the romance was at least something to write home about. It wasn't. Emory's insistence to have sex with Nik even when he knew Nik was in a relationship grated on my nerves. The "I love you" came out of nowhere and generally I felt zero connection between them.

So yeah, no rating:(

SheReadsALot says

Blurb = :)

Cover = :/

Mak says

2.3 stars. I was surprised that this book didn't work for me. I like insta-love, gay-for-you or coming-out-for-you, MCs that are hockey players or figure skaters, bratty, self-confident bottoms... But I did not like Nik, and it's always a problem when you don't care for one of the MCs. I liked Emory, but I didn't love him,

which I guess wasn't enough to offset my dislike of Nik. And I did not feel the heat between the two. I also felt like the sex was written by someone who did not have a good grasp of how to write sex scenes between men. Finally, except for Zack, Nik's coach, and Emory's siblings, the secondary characters were meh.

Funzee Shu says

"If I'm a fruit loop, Nik Vetrov, then you're the cream that could keep me afloat. We're a good fit, you and I, and might have a nice life together if you'd just pull up your big-boy pants."

Secretobcession says

3.5 Stars rounded up because it's HOCKEY!

I really, really, really wanted to love this book. It had so much going for it...

- * Written by one of my favorite Authors - CHECK
- * Story about a Pro Hockey Player - CHECK
- * Story about a Pro Figure Skater - CHECK
- * M/M Romance - CHECK

As I get started into the book, I have a squee moment...one of MC's a Pro Hockey player who has just joined the Chicago Wolves mid-season. OMG! This is a real AHL pro hockey team (not a fictitiously named team). This team is my hometown team's I-90 Rival. Big Time. LOL. I could have written this story. (no not really, as I leave that to the professionals) (FYI...hometown team - Rockford IceHogs)

Anyway...I digress with my hockey fan-girl moment...the other MC is a top winning Figure Skater who is proudly out. I could just picture him flying across the ice in the routines Ms. Ashling describes in the book. I love that his family is such a great source of love & support for him.

So...We have 2 MC's that are quite believable in my mind...yet the instant love factor was a bit unbelievable for me. Perhaps it was that Emory was so young. But, it's fiction, so anything can happen.

Over all this book is a sweet light read. Even with the bit of drama, it didn't go all angsty on me. I almost didn't think that Ms. Ashling wrote it, as it's so different from her previous books.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

Didn't like the writing style or the characters. I DNFed early on.

Don Bradshaw says

Ms Ashling scores on and off the ice with this complex story. Emory and Nik are wonderful. The dichotomy between their families is a sad statement but acceptance is constantly improving. Well written and neatly paced, this story is Ms Ashling at the top of her game.

Caroline Brand says

REVIEWED FOR PRISM BOOK ALLIANCE

Emory Lowe is such a soft and beautiful person from the very beginning of this story that you cannot help but fall for him. Out and proud, his family are his biggest supporters and he has never felt the need to hide who he is or tone down his flamboyance as he has never seen the ugly side of homophobia or had it directed at him. That ugliness arrives on his doorstep as new neighbours move in across the street.

It's heart-breaking to watch Emory have to discover and acknowledge that such hatred exists.

Thankfully Igor won't be living across the street from Emory and his family, he is only there to drop his son, Nik, who is an ice hockey player off in his new home. He will then take himself back to Canada but not before trying to threaten his son into submission.

Nik is only 20 years old but his entire life has been planned with military precision by his father since the moment of his birth. His father's ways and ideas are non-negotiable and if he ever voices his opinion he is quickly met with violence. Living on his own for the first time, able to start making decisions for himself brings a massive change to Nik, and although terrified for his own safety and of those who are around him, he slowly starts to find out who he really is.

Nik isn't gay. Nik can't be gay. Nik even thinking he may be gay is enough to get him killed. So why is he so taken with Emory? What is it about his neighbour that makes his pulse beat faster? That makes him smile? For all these facts Nik and Emory fall into a pretty easy relationship but there is always a dark cloud hanging over them in the form of Igor and his threats.

For all the darkness and brutality that Igor's character brings to the story Emory's father Tom brings the exact opposite. He is fun, loving and supportive and although there is a reason from his past that might make him act the way he does, he is inherently a good person and he showers his son, and later Nik, with acceptance and love. He was the perfect counterpart to Igor giving both the boys strength and solid advice. He is a true champion in Emory's life.

This story has some pretty bleak moments, it doesn't skate over the very real damage that homophobia presents or the damage it can cause. It's a story of first love, of finding out about who you really are and the importance of controlling your own life and loving who you want instead of who you should.

Heller says

4.5

Delicious.

This was a lovely little sports romance, very *Cutting Edge* with a figure skater and a hockey player. I will say that it got off to a rough start for me but action ramped up quite quickly and I loved it.

Emory is cheeky and I loved his bold love of life and dedication to his sport. He exasperates his father but there's a solid foundation of support and love there. This is in direct contrast to Nik's upbringing. He's drowning under the expectations and abuse his father puts on him. It was lovely to see him spread his wings a bit once he was on his own and away from his family. I enjoyed reading how Emory's family basically just adopted him. Very sweet.

There was an interesting dynamic between Nik and Emory's father Tom. The relationship which started out rough developed into a protective father/son one that I really enjoyed reading. Nik deserved that support from Emory's family.

There's a lot of back and forth between Emory and Nik. Great chemistry both on and off the ice and I liked that there were hints of both sports but the story wasn't dominated by them. At its core it's about these young men being influenced by each other, grounding each other...growing and changing and falling in love. Love is hard work but they're athletes and that's second nature to them.

The story gets very intense when Nik's father Igor finds out his son is gay. Scary intense. Maybe a bit over the top but I ate it up with a spoon. This read had a great story with strong personalities both the main and secondary characters. The build-up of the relationship is tense and funny and sexy. I had a blast with this read and I'm going to go look for more from this author.

****Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review****

~☆~Dαni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

The idea of a flamboyant figure skater and badass enforcer hockey player getting it on makes me all kinds of hot under the (metaphorical) collar.

Throw in a Slavic MC, and I'm pretty much ringing that bell!

The opposites attract theme worked well here, and there was enough steam (**gay first-timer + two butt-sex virgins = FUCK YES!**) to make me happy.

Enforcing Emory is YA/NA (lots of parental involvement, and Emory lives with his family), but contains adult themes.

Nik drove me crazy with his SUCK-MY-DICK-BUT-I'M-NOT-GAY denial. I get that he was deeply in

the closet and scared of his own shadow since his dad is a crazy Ukrainian homophobe. Even so, I felt like he was using Emory (not that Emory was complaining).

Let me insert this public service announcement: Not all Slavs are homophobes, people.

But Nik's dad is one of a kind, and the homophobia in this book is melodrama central.

And then there's Emory's dad, the kind racist who hates "foreigners," calls Russians (BTW, Ukrainians are NOT Russians!) "commies," and thinks all jobs should go to good ol' Americans, etc.

But he's a nice guy who supports his gay son and finally takes Nik under his wing. Give the man a cigar.

I enjoyed the second part of the book (minus the cray-cray that was Nik's dad, of course) better than the first. Once Nik stopped pushing Emory away, they were damn cute and sexy together

Even though the beginning dragged and there were a few WTH? moments, I felt the HEA.

Kazza says

Stop by for the blog tour excerpt and giveaway May 29th - June 10th, 2015

<http://ontopdownunderbookreviews.com/...>

Trio says

Mickie B. Ashling always comes up with the most imaginative and interesting plots, and *Enforcing Emory* is one of her best - add in a little hockey and I'm there! This is such a creative story with characters who are completely engaging. In addition to the entertaining and well researched passages on both figure skating and hockey, the romance is hot as hell! I haven't enjoyed a story this much in a long time and with the Winter Olympics coming up, the timing for me couldn't be more perfect.

Enforcing Emory is delightful from beginning to end. Between the exciting sports scenes and all the family drama there are several important messages that resonate with me. Like the idea of being true to yourself but maintaining a balance and considering others', along with tolerance and acceptance of our fellow humans; both ring through loud and clear without being preachy.

Eighteen-year-old US National Figure Skating Champion, Emory Lowe is gearing up for the upcoming Winter Olympics. Irritated because he garners more attention for his over the top outfits and flamboyant moves on the ice than for his skill and talent, Emory balks at suggestions he "tone it down" since the games are being held in Sochi, Russia; where the laws against same sex relationships and blatant homophobia could be dangerous to Emory's safety as well as overshadow his achievements in figure skating. But Emory can't let this opportunity to raise awareness of human rights pass him by.

When AHL Enforcer, Nikolai Vetrov moves in across the street, Emory is immediately attracted and as soon as he gets an inkling that Nik returns his interest, the rest is history. Emory's patient, sweet seduction is hot as hell and he's determined to show Nik how amazing sex between two guys can be.

The son of Ukrainian immigrants, Nik's family moved to North America so he could pursue a professional hockey career. Nik has grown up in a homophobic and bigoted household with an alcoholic father who rules with an iron fist, the complete opposite to Emory's own dad's unwavering support and acceptance. Both sets of parents have given up so much for their sons' dreams, and the drama surrounding the families is one of the most interesting parts of this story.

Ashling does intense, low-angst relationships better than anyone I know and this is a sweet and passionate romance that hits all my buttons: first timers, virgin, out for you, and smoking hot sex scenes, what's not to love! The chemistry between these two is just incredible.

John Solo's narration always brings Mickie B. Ashling's characters to life and he digs deep to deliver a stellar performance in *Enforcing Emory*. Between all the accents, variety in the ages, and challenging female characters, Solo really shows off his incredible talent. This is a very entertaining story made even more enjoyable as an audiobook.

Alex Akira says

I can't seem to wipe the smile from my lips as I write this review on Mickie B. Ashling's latest, 'Enforcing Emory'. I adored this tension-ridden story of romance between two top-league ice skaters from different sides of the skating rink. Threaded with wonderful details of the competitive worlds of figure skating and hockey, this real-time romance is packed with hotness. The visceral heat of sublime sex as the two young men carefully explore their budding attraction, and the fire of fury as the rising stars courageously confront the challenges of old world bigotry and modern prejudice. Great pacing, excellent descriptive writing, and sweet and stark climatic moments made for an exhilarating story that had me cheering these two lovers on...and smiling...still smiling.

Graceful, surefooted ice dancer Emory Lowe is on the fast track to Olympic gold when Ukrainian hockey player Nikolai moves in next door. Openly gay and known for his flamboyant skating style, Emory is immediately attracted to his hot neighbor, but a sociable visit reveals that not only is Nikolai straight, he's firmly under the thumb of his homophobic father. Disappointed, Emory tries to accept that friendship may be all he can expect from his new neighbor, but a few more visits with the gorgeous Ukrainian has Emory certain sparks of interest are shooting from hockey player's smoldering blue eyes. Is it possible that Nikolai is gay?

After settling their son in his new apartment, Nikolai's family returns to Canada but not before Nik's father repeatedly warns him to stay away from the "poofster" next door. Alone and worried about his new job as the enforcer for the Chicago Wolves, the barely twenty-year-old Nik finds the Lowe family's warm invitations to join them for dinner difficult to resist...and Emory's captivating charm even more so. Initially Nikolai chalks up his response to Emory's open flirtations to missing his longtime fiancée, but soon he can't deny that what he feels for Emory goes far beyond admiration for the plucky figure skater's dynamic skating skills.

I found much to love about this story and its charismatic lead characters. Emory made for one cute but determined figure skating champ. This character was an excellent portrayal of how inner strength coupled with genuine support can produce spectacular drive, confidence, and self-reliance in an individual. Emory's

ability to keep his focus on his sport despite all the distractions thrown his way added to the realism of this story and shed a bright light on what it takes to truly be a champion. While Emory wouldn't let Nikolai ignore their attraction, he did not smother him either, which made Emory even more lovable to me. Nikolai, I believe, is responsible for my biggest smile. His ordeal through the story was truly heartwrenching, but the courage he displayed when he confronted his sexuality and chose to come out despite the possible loss of his family was truly inspiring.

This is why I love Mickie B. Ashling's works; I can't help but feel deeply for her characters and come away inspired. Also—I've said this before and I'll repeat it here—this author has a winning way of weaving information on her subject, in this case the figure skating, hockey and bigotry, in a manner that it adds to the story and enhances the romance between its characters. To my mind, her works also encourage the reader to recognize that the LGBTQ community has come far in its struggle for equality, but the struggle is not over...or perhaps that with compassion and support we can all transcend the challenges we face in our daily lives. All that inspiration and a helluva romance story make for another captivating winner!

Thank you, Mickie B. Ashling, keep 'em coming, please.

"Ice-melting Heat & Heart-melting Courage = Inspiring Romance!"

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

Cindi says

To celebrate the release of Enforcing Emory Mickie B. Ashling stopped by On Top Down Under Book Reviews with a great excerpt!

Full review can be found at -

This is a nice opposites attract story. Emory is a flamboyant figure skater who will soon be competing in the Olympics in Sochi. Nik is a Ukrainian up-and-coming hockey player who just accepted a position on a team in Chicago. When Nik moves in across the street from Emory's family, there's instant lust for Emory, but Nik is straight, right? Well, maybe not.

There is quite a bit of homophobia and family drama in this story. While I found parts to be a bit over the top, it was still an entertaining read. It takes a little while for Nik to finally come to terms with his feelings for another man. He's been groomed his entire life to do everything according to his father and his father's ways. Falling in love with Emory - who is in the public eye - could hurt Nik, not only if his hockey team isn't gay friendly, but it could also hurt him (in more ways than one) with his family.

Overall, a nice read. I loved Emory from the start, though he did have a few moments that had me shaking my head. As for Nik, it took a little while to warm up to him but when I did, I ended up really liking him.

This book was provided by the author in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Kathleen says

DNF 73%

This nothing more than a thinly veiled hate-fest directed at Russians. No thank you. If the author had kept it directed at Russian leadership and not dragged it into the ridiculous, it might have worked for me.

EDIT: I returned the book to the online retailer as I refuse to support the author.
